

4.0 ALTERNATIVES

4.1 CEQA REQUIREMENTS

The key requirements under CEQA to identify and evaluate alternatives in an Environmental Impact Report are listed below:

- CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) states that “*An EIR shall describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives.*”
- Section 15126.6 (b) states that “*...the discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly.*”

Under CEQA, the City must identify feasible alternatives that will avoid, or at least lessen, any significant impacts associated with the project. CEQA defines “feasible” in the statute (PRC 21061.1) and in the CEQA Guidelines as follows:

- "Feasible" means capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, legal, social, and technological factors.

The City must determine what represents a feasible alternative, taking into account factors such as legal and social constraints as well as costs and engineering feasibility with available information. EIRs are only required to include analysis of alternatives that are “potentially” feasible and meet the overall project objectives. It is the public agency (City Council and Planning Commission), not an EIR, that bears the responsibility for making definitive findings as to whether specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations make infeasible or feasible the “potentially feasible” mitigation measures or alternatives identified in an EIR. A decision-making body can, therefore, support a finding of infeasibility or feasibility (particularly with respect to economic, social, and housing factors) with information outside the EIR, so long as such information appears somewhere in the administrative record. This EIR focuses on the potential feasibility of mitigation measures and alternatives of the Veronica Meadows project with respect to technological and environmental factors. However, this EIR does not make any final determinations on the feasibility of alternatives presented, particularly with respect to economic, social, and housing factors that need to be considered in any final analysis of feasibility. These factors will be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council during their comprehensive review of the proposed project at public hearings following completion of the Final EIR.

The City must also evaluate how an alternative may affect meeting the overall project objectives. An alternative cannot be dismissed simply because it prevents the project objective from being fully

realized, nor can an alternative be rejected because it would not achieve all of the project objectives. On the other hand, simply because it is technologically possible to build an alternative does not mean that it is feasible from a legal and social perspective.

As described in Section 2.1, the overall goal of the Veronica Meadows Specific Plan is to develop the vacant lands at the project site for residential use in accordance with the City of Santa Barbara General Plan. The applicant has elected to utilize the Specific Plan process to allow for flexibility in achieving various project objectives, some of which are derived from economic considerations inherent in developing a project, while others may involve benefits to the future residents and the general public. The project objectives are presented in Section 2.1 and are as follows:

- Annex unincorporated parcels to the City of Santa Barbara, thereby improving land use planning and public services in this portion of the Las Positas Valley
- Develop market-rate housing to meet ongoing housing demands in the City
- Develop the project site in a manner that respects and accommodates site constraints and is compatible with the natural setting and existing development of the surrounding area
- Ensure that development provides adequately for public safety, services, and facilities
- Implement a creek corridor restoration plan to improve habitat and water quality along Arroyo Burro Creek consistent with City creek policies and programs
- Provide adequate vehicle circulation and traffic control
- Improve public access in the Las Positas Valley and establish beneficial pedestrian and bike routes that enhance coastal and recreation access

Under CEQA, any significant environmental impacts of an alternative must also be identified and considered in the comparison with the proposed project. In addition, the No Project Alternative must be evaluated in an EIR for information to the decision-makers.

4.2 NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

4.2.1 Description of the Alternative

Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed land development and associated public open space, trail, and creek restoration would not be implemented. The project site would remain undeveloped. Property management and activities on the property would remain the same as today. Public access to the site is prohibited and trespassers can be removed or cited if the landowner wishes to enforce the prohibition. However, the current and previous landowners have not fully enforced this prohibition, and the following activities occur on the property with or without the landowner's express consent:

- Walking or hiking. Local residents traverse the property during walks or jogs. It appears that residents from both the Alan Road neighborhood, and from the Stone Creek Condominiums

travel through the property as part of longer walking or jogging trips. The main trail through the property is well known and used by local residents.

- Dog walking. The site is used by adjacent residents for dog walking.
- Motorcycle and BMX Use. The site is periodically used by residents for riding motorcycles and BMX bicycles. Courses are periodically constructed in the center of the site, often with very large ramps (over 4 feet high) and banked curves. The courses are constructed by hand, and by the action of the bike riders. They are often well maintained and used frequently (2-3 times per week) during the summer. The main users are teenagers and young adults. They access the property from Alan Road.
- Outdoor Play. The site is also used by local residents for general play (e.g., kid games, rope swings, building forts), nature enjoyment (general bird watching, feeding mourning doves near Alan Road), and outdoor painting. In addition, the site has been used on occasion by teenagers for congregating, which may include smoking, drinking, and drug use.
- Other Possible Activities. The following other activities may have occurred in the past, and/or may occur in the future if access to the site is not fully precluded: paintball games, rocketry, model airplanes, Frisbee games, and archery. In addition, equestrian riders from Hope Ranch have visited the site in the past, using informal trails on the west side of the property for access.

Brush clearing and/or mowing occurs periodically for fire abatement purposes. Annual weeds are typically removed 1 or 2 times per year in the open grassy areas of the property to prevent the build up of fuel in areas where people walk. The City periodically inspects, and maintains as necessary, the existing sewer line from Campanil Hill to Alan Road and the water line from Stone Creek Condominiums to Alan Road.

The 35.71-acre open space parcel would remain unchanged under this alternative.

The current site conditions reflect the above activities and property management. As such, under this scenario, the environmental conditions of the site in the near future would likely remain similar to what is observed today. These conditions are summarized below:

- The site is subject to periodic, extensive disturbance from motorcycle and bicycle use, which removes vegetation and creates erosion problems by exposing soil, creating gullies and ruts, and loosening soils on hillsides by forming trails in steep terrain. These areas are exposed to erosion due to rainfall and runoff, eventually causing sedimentation to Arroyo Burro Creek that is higher than under natural conditions.
- The creation of trails on the lower slopes of the property have the potential to destabilize landslides over time, which could cause minor to major land movement and the associated increase in winter erosion.
- The current unmanaged activities at the property support the current dominance of non-native weedy plant species in the flat grassy areas and along the trail in the creek corridor. The continued disturbance of the ground by motorcycle riders and by pedestrians facilitates the continued colonization by invasive species.

- The banks and stream terraces of Arroyo Burro Creek at the project site contain a high amount of non-native weedy species, such as giant reed and German ivy. These species have colonized the creek corridor due to many factors, including a continuing source of seeds and plants from upstream areas, eroding banks that provide colonization opportunities, and introduction of plants and seeds to the site from users. These plants have become firmly established at the site, and they are expected to continue their expansion over time. The habitat conditions along the creek corridor are considered degraded under current conditions, due primarily to the abundance of non-native species. This degradation would continue unabated under current land use activities and property management. It is anticipated that the giant reed would dominate most of the riparian corridor in the next 10 years.
- There are several locations along the Arroyo Burro Creek banks that are highly eroded. Some of this erosion is due to channel downcutting which appears to be in response to the cumulative development of the watershed since the development of the South Coast. This erosion consists of very high, oversteepened banks that continually slough or fail due to the effects of gravity and overbank runoff. There are two locations along the creek at the project site where bank erosion was caused by bank failure during El Nino storms that redirected the stream, which in turn, eroded the banks and cut into upland areas. Both types of bank erosion would continue in the future. The frequency of episodic erosion may increase because the channel is becoming clogged with dense giant reed thickets which would increase water elevations and re-direct stream energy into the banks.
- The landslides at the project site are considered inactive, and would likely remain intact unless there is significant land disturbance at the toes of the landslides due to trail building for motorcycles.
- The potential for wildfires originating from the property would remain the same under the No Project Alternative, as the types of activities on the site would not change substantially. In the upland areas, the fire hazard at the site would also remain the same, as the nature, extent, and density of fuel would not change appreciably over time. Accumulation of giant reed along the creek bottom may lead to an increase in fire hazard, since this vegetation is flammable when dry. The project site is located in a City-designated High Fire Hazard Area due to the combination of topography, fuel, and difficult access.

4.2.2 Feasibility and Meeting the Overall Project Objective

This alternative is considered potentially feasible from a physical and technical standpoint. ~~However, This alternative is not expected to be feasible, as the project applicant purchased the property for the purposes of developing a project.~~ When the purchase was made, the land was zoned residential by the County. The applicants, therefore, expected that some residential development could be allowed on the property, although it was known that any development would need to be sited and designed to minimize impacts on the environment. Without any development of the site, it may not be economically feasible for the landowner to maintain ownership and manage the property.

The No Project Alternative would not meet the overall project objective of developing the site for residential use consistent with the City General Plan.

4.2.3 Environmental Impacts

Under this alternative, the environmental impacts associated with the proposed project would not occur. The significant impacts of the proposed project include the following (Class I and II impacts):

Biological Resources

- Loss of large oak tree, loss of riparian vegetation, and creation of gap in the riparian corridor due to the bridge over Arroyo Burro Creek
- Permanent loss of about 6.8 acres of mostly non-native habitats and seven oak trees due to the construction of residential lots and roads. [Note: The project also involves the restoration/enhancement of 6.8 acres of riparian habitat on and off the project site, and restoration of 3.8 acres of upland habitat]
- Loss of up to 7 coast live oak trees from the project site
- Disturbance and possible displacement of wildlife from the creek corridor due to construction activities
- Adverse effect of noise, lighting, human activity, pets, and pesticides associated with the residential development on aquatic and riparian habitats and species of Arroyo Burro Creek

Drainage, Flooding, and Water Quality

- [Collecting on-and off-site runoff in a storm drain system and directing it to only two storm drain outlets would reduce infiltration and bank seepage along Arroyo Burro Creek; construction and maintenance of large storm drain outlets could cause hydraulic impacts. Note: this impact is not applicable to the current \(2008\) project design identified in Section 4.13.](#)
- Proposed riparian corridor restoration plans and bank repair could cause unintended adverse impacts by increasing bank erosion and instability along Arroyo Burro Creek if not properly designed
- Temporary adverse effects on water quality in Arroyo Burro Creek due to construction activities
- Adverse effect of stormwater pollution from land development on Arroyo Burro Creek water quality

Geologic Hazards

- Potential liquefiable soils, expansive soils, and high groundwater conditions could adversely affect proposed development

- Landslide hazards are present at the project site

Cultural Resources

- Adverse effect of development on historic properties of the site

Traffic and Circulation

- Traffic associated with the residential development would add additional trips to local intersections, and when combined with other future projects, would be significant
- The proposed traffic light controlled intersection at the site entrance and Las Positas Road is not warranted by Caltrans standards. The use of a one-way stop controlled intersection is feasible, but would cause traffic safety hazards unless certain improvements were implemented. (The City is taking control of Las Positas Road from Caltrans, and anticipates installation of a traffic signal at this location.)
- Construction truck traffic along Las Positas Road, Cliff Drive, and Alan Road could degrade pavement conditions.

Public Health and Safety

- Potential public exposure to pesticides used for maintenance of open space landscaping
- Potential public exposure to radon gas that may be emitted from underlying geologic formations

Air Quality

- Generation of fugitive dust during major site grading and earthwork

Noise

- Increased noise affecting residents during Phase 1 construction due to truck traffic along Alan Road

However, the following environmental impacts of current property management and site activities would continue to occur:

- Soil disturbance and erosion which causes sedimentation of Arroyo Burro Creek
- Destabilization of landslides by unmanaged trail creation and building
- Increase in the density and extent of non-native invasive weeds at the site, including within the creek corridor
- Bank erosion and sedimentation along Arroyo Burro Creek

In addition, the environmental benefits of the proposed creek corridor restoration (6.8 acres), upland habitat restoration (3.8 acres), and the public access benefits of a trail and public open space would not occur under this alternative.

4.3 NO ANNEXATION ALTERNATIVE

4.3.1 Description of the Alternative

Under this alternative, the following three parcels owned or controlled by the project applicant and proposed for annexation for the residential development would not be annexed as planned:

047-010-016	10.28 acres	Proposed for 24 housing units and open space.
047-010-053	4.49 acres	
047-010-011	35.71 acres	Proposed for open space

Parcel No. 047-010-009 is a 5.89-acre property along Las Positas Road that is owned by the City of Santa Barbara. The applicant would require an easement to construct the access bridge and road to the site. The City of Santa Barbara initiated annexation of this parcel on November 18, 1993, pursuant to Planning Commission Resolution No. 078-93. It is assumed that this parcel would be annexed under this alternative - the same as under the proposed project, ~~as was the annexation of parcel 047-010-011.~~ [\[Note: annexation of this parcel was completed in April 2008\].](#)

The applicant has requested that the above properties be annexed to the City. The annexation of parcel 047-010-016 was initiated by the Planning Commission on November 18, 1993, pursuant to Planning Commission Resolution No. 078-93. The annexation of the 4.49-acre portion of parcel 047-010-053 (to be subdivided) was initiated by the Planning Commission on February 3, 2000, pursuant to Planning Commission Resolution No. 004-00.

The City believes that annexation of these parcels is appropriate to ensure logical and consistent land use planning in the Las Positas Valley, efficient public services, and orderly development, as concluded in the City's Draft Annexation Policy Update for this area. However, for the sake of evaluating all major alternatives to the proposed project, the City has included this alternative. Under this alternative, the parcels would be developed under the jurisdiction of the County, and in accordance with the County Comprehensive Plan and zoning designations. A summary of the potential land use and housing units on the subject parcels if the land were not annexed is provided in Tables 4-1 and 4-2.

**TABLE 4-1
EXISTING (COUNTY)AND PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS
OF AFFECTED PARCELS**

Parcel Number	Size (ac.)	Proposed City General Plan Designation	Existing County General Plan Designation	Comparison to Development under the Proposed Project
047-010-016	10.28	Residential – 2 Dwelling Units per Acre	Residential, 4.6 units/acre and Public or Private Open Space (for Arroyo Burro Creek)	Theoretical build out of 47 units outside creek corridor
047-010-053 (derived from adjusting the larger parcel)	4.49	Residential – 2 Dwelling Units per Acre	Residential Ranchette, 1 unit/20 acres (but one single family dwelling per legal lot is allowed)	Insufficient land for residential development, beyond one single family dwelling
047-061-026	0.04	Residential – 2 Dwelling Units per Acre	N/A	N/A
047-010-011	35.11	Major Hillside, Open Space, Buffer/ Stream	Residential Ranchette, 1 unit/20 acres	Theoretical build out of one unit, but unlikely due to site slope and landslide constraints

Under this alternative, the County’s Comprehensive Plan land use designation would allow for a higher density of housing units on parcel 047-010-016 (Table 4-1). The current land use designation for the 4.49-acre subdivided parcel 047-010-053 would not allow any development because the parcel would be too small.

With current County zoning, the minimum lot size on the 10.28-acre parcel would be 8,000 square feet (Table 4-2). Under the originally proposed project, the average lot size would be 8,775 square feet, and 13 units would be located on this parcel. In the context of this alternative, no units would be allowed on the 4.49-acre parcel (047-010-053) due to its small size and current low density zoning (Table 4-2), but if recognized as a legal lot it could support one dwelling unit. Under the originally proposed project, 11 units would be located on the smaller parcel.

The number of units that could be developed on the 10.28-acre parcel under this alternative is based on the following assumptions. The setback from the creek would be the same as the proposed project. The public open space along the creek corridor created by the creek setback under the proposed project encompasses 4.28 acres. Hence, the available land for development on the 10.28-acre parcel would be 6.0 acres. The maximum allowable density of residential units in this area would be 32 units under the County zoning. It is likely that the number of units that would be constructed would be less because of the steep slopes and landslide constraints on the west side of this parcel. Hence, the number of units on the 10.28-acre parcel would likely be similar (i.e., 20 to 25 units) to the total number of units under the proposed project. However, the density of units under this alternative could be higher than for the proposed project. In addition, very little open space would be included in the development of the 10.28-acre parcel.

TABLE 4-2
EXISTING (COUNTY) AND PROPOSED ZONING OF AFFECTED PARCELS

Parcel Number	Size (ac.)	Proposed City Zoning after Annexation	Existing County Zoning	Comparison to Development under the Original Proposed Project
047-010-016	10.28	SP-8/SD-3, Specific Plan/ Coastal Zone Overlay	8-R-1, Single Family Residential, (8,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size)	Increase in housing units on this parcel from proposed 13 to up to 56 units
047-010-053 (derived from adjusting larger parcel)	4.49	SP-8/SD-3, Specific Plan/ Coastal Zone Overlay	RR-20 Rural Residential (20 acre minimum lot size)	Insufficient land to construct any housing units beyond one allowed on a legal lot. Hence, a reduction in proposed 10 -11 housing units on this parcel.
047-061-026	0.04	SP-8/SD-3, Specific Plan/ Coastal Zone Overlay	Not specified	Insufficient land to be considered
047-010-011	35.11	SP-8, Specific Plan	RR-20 Rural Residential (20 acre minimum lot size)	Theoretical build out of one unit, but unlikely due to site slope and landslide constraints

Under this alternative, the project site would be restricted to the 10.28-acre parcel. The 4.49-acre parcel would not be developed and would remain as open space.

All other aspects of this alternative would be similar to the proposed project. Hence, the alternative would include a new intersection at Las Positas Road, a bridge across Arroyo Burro Creek, stabilization of several landslides, a public trail and open space along the creek, and a creek restoration project.

4.3.2 Feasibility and Meeting the Overall Project Objective

This alternative is considered potentially feasible [from a physical and technical standpoint](#) because the applicant has the option of withdrawing the request for annexation and submitting a new land use application to the County of Santa Barbara.

This alternative would generally meet the overall project objective, although the development would be governed by the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, not the City General Plan.

4.3.3 Environmental Impacts

A comparison of the significant (Class I and II) environmental impacts of this alternative with the proposed project is provided in Table 4-3. This alternative could increase the following impacts due

to the potentially higher density of units: stormwater pollution, adverse effect on hydraulic conditions in Arroyo Burro Creek and riparian vegetation due to modified site drainage, and adverse effects of humans and pets on creek habitat. The following impacts would be reduced due to the smaller project site: construction-related erosion, exposure to landslide hazards, and impacts to native and non-native vegetation.

TABLE 4-3
COMPARATIVE IMPACTS OF THE NO ANNEXATION AND DRAFT PRE-ANNEXATION DESIGNATION ALTERNATIVES

Potentially Significant Impacts of the Proposed Project (all are fully mitigable except impacts #8 and #16)	Impacts of Alternatives Compared to the Proposed Project	
	No Annexation Alternative	Draft Pre-Annexation Zoning Alternative
1. Adverse effect on hydraulic conditions in Arroyo Burro Creek due to modified site drainage	Greater impact due to potentially higher density	Greater impact due to potentially increased density and number of units
2. Unintended adverse effects on bank erosion conditions due to proposed riparian corridor restoration plans	No difference	No difference
3. Temporary adverse effects on Arroyo Burro Creek water quality due to construction activities	Less impact because of smaller site	Less impact because of smaller site
4. Adverse effect of stormwater pollution from land development on Arroyo Burro Creek water quality	Greater impact due to potentially higher density	Greater impact due to potentially increased density and number of units
5. Potential liquefiable soils, expansive soils, and high groundwater conditions could adversely affect proposed development	No difference	No difference
6. Geologic hazard associated with landslides at the project site	Less impact because of fewer landslides affected	Less impact because of fewer landslides affected
7. Permanent loss of about 6.8 acres of mostly non-native habitats due to the construction of residential lots and roads	Less impact because of smaller site	Less impact because of smaller site
8. Loss of large oak tree, loss of riparian vegetation, and creation of gap in the riparian corridor due to the bridge over Arroyo Burro Creek	No difference	No difference
9. Disturbance and possible displacement of wildlife from the creek corridor due to construction activities	No difference	No difference
10. Adverse effect of noise, human activity, and pets associated with the residential development on aquatic and riparian habitats and species of Arroyo Burro Creek	Greater impact due to potentially higher density	Greater impact due to potentially increased density and number of units
11. Redirecting the flows to only two storm drain outlets would reduce infiltration and bank seepage along Arroyo Burro Creek	Greater impact due to potentially higher density	Greater impact due to potentially increased density and number of units

Potentially Significant Impacts of the Proposed Project (all are fully mitigable except impacts #8 and #16)	Impacts of Alternatives Compared to the Proposed Project	
	No Annexation Alternative	Draft Pre-Annexation Zoning Alternative
12. Adverse effect of development on historic properties of the site	No difference	No difference
13. Traffic associated with the residential development would add additional trips local intersections, and when combined with other future projects, would be significant	No difference	Greater impact due to potentially increased number of units
14. The proposed traffic light controlled intersection at the site entrance and Las Positas Road is not warranted by Caltrans standards. The use of a one-way stop controlled intersection is feasible, but would cause traffic safety hazards unless certain improvements were implemented	No difference	No difference
15. Construction truck traffic along Las Positas Road, Cliff Drive, and Alan Road could degrade pavement conditions.	No difference	No difference
16. Temporary construction noise impacts on residents of Alan Road during Phase 1	No difference	No difference
17. Potential public exposure to pesticides used for maintenance of open space landscaping	No difference	No difference
18. Potential public exposure to radon gas that may be emitted from underlying geologic formations	No difference	No difference
19. Generation of fugitive dust during major site grading and earthwork	No difference	No difference

4.4 USE OF DRAFT PRE-ANNEXATION ZONING DESIGNATIONS

4.4.1 Description of the Alternative

Under this alternative, the four parcels owned by the project applicant and proposed for annexation for the residential development would be developed in accordance with the City's General Plan designations and zoning presented in the Draft Annexation Policy Update in 1995. The proposed development would require approval of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) instead of a Specific Plan.

Under this alternative, the 10.28-acre parcel, which includes developable land for housing units as well as the creek corridor, would receive a General Plan land use designation of 5 units per acre. As noted above in Section 4.3.1, the developable land on this parcel encompasses about 6.0 acres. Hence, the maximum allowable number of units would be 30. The number of actual units approved for this parcel is likely to be less, similar to the 24 units associated with the originally proposed project.

The 4.49-acre parcel created by the lot line adjustment would receive a land use designation of Major Hillside and Open Space, thereby restricting and possibly precluding any future development on this parcel (Table 4-4). The proposed use of the 35.71-acre parcel for open space would not change under this alternative.

**TABLE 4-4
EXISTING (CITY) AND PROPOSED GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS
OF AFFECTED PARCELS**

Parcel Number	Size (ac.)	Proposed City General Plan Designation (proposed project)	City General Plan Designations from Pre-Annexation Study	Consistent with General Plan Designation from Pre-Annexation Study?
047-010-016	10.28	Residential – 2 Dwelling Units per Acre	Residential – 5 Dwelling Units per Acre	Yes
047-010-053 (adjusted from larger parcel)	4.49	Residential – 2 Dwelling Units per Acre	Major Hillside, Open Space, Stream/Buffer, & Pedestrian/Equestrian Trail	No
047-061-026	0.04	Residential – 2 Dwelling Units per Acre	N/A	N/A
047-010-011	35.71	Major Hillside, Open Space, Buffer/ Stream	Major Hillside, Open Space, Stream/Buffer, & Pedestrian/Equestrian Trail	Yes

Using the suggested pre-annexation zoning, the 10.28-acre parcel would receive a zoning designation of E-3 (minimum lot size of 7,500 square feet). As noted above, the developable land on this parcel encompasses about 6.0 acres. Hence, the maximum allowable units would be 34. The number of actual units approved for this parcel is likely to be less, similar to the 24 units associated with the originally proposed project (Table 4-5).

The 4.49-acre parcel created by a lot line adjustment would receive a zoning designation of 20-A-1 (Table 4-5). Due to the small size of this parcel and the General Plan designation of Open Space, it would not be developable.

The proposed use of the 35.71-acre parcel for open space would not change under this alternative.

In summary, the number of residential units under this alternative would be similar, or slightly higher, than under the proposed project. The units would be restricted to the 10.28-acre parcel, compared to the proposed 14.81-acre project site. There could be a higher density of units and less open space under this alternative. All other aspects of this alternative would be similar to the proposed project. For example, the alternative would include a new intersection at Las Positas Road, a bridge across Arroyo Burro Creek, stabilization of several landslides, a public trail and open space along the creek, and a creek restoration project.

**TABLE 4-5
EXISTING (CITY) AND PROPOSED ZONING OF AFFECTED PARCELS**

Parcel Number	Size (ac.)	Proposed City Zoning after Annexation	City Zoning from Draft Pre-Annexation Study
047-010-016	10.28	SP-8/SD-3, Specific Plan/ Coastal Zone Overlay	E-3 One Family Residence/ PUD Planned Unit Development
047-010-053 (subdivided from larger parcel)	4.49	SP-8/SD-3, Specific Plan/ Coastal Zone Overlay	20-A-1/SD-3, One Family Residence 20 acre minimum lot size/Coastal Zone Overlay
047-061-026	0.04	SP-8/SD-3, Specific Plan/ Coastal Zone Overlay	20-A-1/SD-3, One Family Residence 20 acre minimum lot size/Coastal Zone Overlay
047-010-011	35.71	SP-8, Specific Plan	20-A-1/SD-3, One Family Residence 20 acre minimum lot size/Coastal Zone Overlay
047-010-009	5.89	P-R/S-D-3, Park and Recreation/ Coastal Overlay Zone	E-3 One Family Residence/ PUD Planned Unit Development

4.4.2 Feasibility and Meeting the Overall Project Objective

This alternative is considered potentially feasible [from a physical and technical standpoint](#) because the applicant could revise the proposal to be consistent with the Draft Pre-Annexation Policy Update Study and process a PUD, or the City could request that the applicant revise the proposal as such.

This alternative would generally meet the overall project objective of developing the site for residential use consistent with the City General Plan.

4.4.3 Environmental Impacts

A comparison of the significant (Class I and II) environmental impacts of this alternative with the proposed project is provided in Table 4-3. This alternative could increase the following impacts due to the potentially higher density of units: stormwater pollution, adverse effect on hydraulic conditions in Arroyo Burro Creek and riparian vegetation due to modified site drainage, adverse effects of humans and pets on creek habitat, and traffic impacts on local intersections. The following impacts would be reduced due to the smaller project site: construction related erosion, exposure to landslide hazards, and impact to native and non-native vegetation.

4.5 ALAN ROAD ACCESS ALTERNATIVE

4.5.1 Description of the Alternative

Under this alternative, the sole access to the project site would be from Alan Road. Lots 1 and 2 at the south end of project site would be reconfigured to provide a vehicular connection from the development to Alan Road. The rest of the project layout would remain the same, except that the entire internal roadway system would be a public road. The bridge over Arroyo Burro Creek and intersection with Las Positas Road would not be constructed.

4.5.2 Feasibility and Meeting the Overall Project Objective

This alternative is [considered](#) potentially feasible [from a physical and technical standpoint](#) because there is sufficient roadway capacity along Alan Road to provide access to the project site, and because the proposed site plan would only require slight modification to provide for this alternative access. The City Fire Department has indicated that this access to the site is suitable in size and location for purposes of emergency access and evacuation. However, this alternative does not meet other City policies and criteria concerning potential impacts to traffic and community compatibility as discussed below. Despite these environmental concerns, this alternative is considered technically and physically feasible as it is possible for the applicant to create a road connection to the proposed development from Alan Road that would meet City criteria for needed emergency access and evacuation of the proposed development. The project is also considered potentially economically feasible given that the alternative proposes similar numbers of dwelling units as the proposed project.

However, the degree to which the Alan Road Access Alternative is feasible from a social and community compatibility perspective is uncertain. Residents living along Alan Road and in the Braemar Ranch Homeowners Association have consistently and strongly opposed any roadway connection that would allow through traffic to use Alan Road. In 1972, the City Council passed Resolution 7528, which addresses concerns that Alan Road might be used in the future to carry through traffic (see Appendix F, Part 2). During the first public review for this EIR, the Braemar Ranch Homeowners Association comment letter recounted their involvement through the project review process and expressed support for the project, with bridge access, proposed at that time and as presented to the City Council in March of 2006 (Appendix D, Letter 20).

In March 2006, after hearing testimony from groups and individuals opposed to the project with a bridge access, as well as from those in support, the City Council directed staff and the applicant to develop a concept plan relying solely on Alan Road for access to the property and containing fewer residential units. In response to this direction, a conceptual site plan was created that eliminated the bridge over the creek and was similar to the Alan Road Access Alternative described in the Final EIR, although it reduced the number of dwelling units to 15. This conceptual plan was reviewed by City Council during a public meeting in October 2006. During this meeting, several members of the public and members of City Council expressed concerns regarding increased traffic on Alan Road and the effect the conceptual plan would have on the existing Alan Road neighborhood. Other than the applicant, no individual or group offered support for this Alan Road Access proposal.

As discussed above in Section 4.1 CEQA Requirements, this ~~Revised~~ EIR focuses on the environmental, physical and technical factors that make the Alan Road Alternative potentially feasible. It is not within the scope of this EIR to make any final determinations on the feasibility of this alternative, particularly based on social, economic, and housing factors. These issues will be considered as part of a final determination on feasibility of this alternative by the ~~Planning Commission and~~ City Council at future public hearings on the project.

This alternative would meet the overall project objective of developing residential uses at the site with adequate vehicle circulation, public safety and services. The project would also meet the project objectives of creek restoration on Arroyo Burro Creek and compatibility of the proposed development with the natural setting of the project site. As discussed below, however, this alternative may not achieve the project goals of improving public pedestrian and bicycle access in the Las Positas Valley and ensuring community compatibility of the proposed project with the existing neighborhoods along Alan Road.

4.5.3 Environmental Impacts

This alternative would involve several new environmental impacts compared to the proposed project, as follows:

- The use of Alan Road would contribute to the current congestion at Cliff Drive/Las Positas Road intersection, until such time as the intersection improvements are completed. If the project were to have its sole access via Alan Road, then the existing plus project traffic volumes at this intersection would result in a new significant impact, not present with the project as proposed (see Appendix F, Part 10, Traffic Study Addendum by Associated Transportation Engineers, Tables 1 and 2). This is because the existing a.m. and p.m. peak hour conditions at this intersection are considered to be LOS F, due to a traffic delay in excess of 50 seconds, well over the City threshold for LOS F of 35 seconds. In such an instance, the City considers a project that adds more than 1% to the traffic volume to result in a significant traffic impact. A 23-unit project with sole access via Alan Road would add 1.3% and 1.8% to the a.m. and p.m. peak hour volumes, respectively. The 15-unit Alan Road access alternative considered by the Council in October 2006, would have a similar significant not mitigated impact with respect to the p.m. peak hour (an increase of 1.1%), but would be under the 1% threshold during the a.m. peak hour. It is concluded that the Alan Road Access Alternative would result in a new significant and not mitigated (Class I) impact with respect to its contribution to the unacceptable Level of Service at the Cliff Drive/Las Positas Road intersection.
- Construction traffic noise in the Alan Road neighborhood resulting from development of the project would be greater under this alternative than under the proposed project. Construction noise due to truck traffic is considered a Class ~~4~~I impact for the project; however, the mitigation identified to lessen noise impacts to residents of the Alan Road neighborhood (Mitigation Measure N-2: prohibiting most Phase 2 construction traffic from using Alan Road) is not possible under this alternative because all construction traffic would

use Alan Road for the duration of the construction period. Therefore the overall length of the noise impact would be greater (18 months versus 6 months) under this alternative.

- The use of Alan Road as sole project access would result in additional traffic on Alan Road and would slightly increase long-term noise and vehicular emissions in the Alan Road neighborhood. These impacts would not exceed any noise or air quality impact significance thresholds due to the relatively low number of additional vehicles. However, additional noise and emissions would be perceptible to many residents compared to current conditions. No CEQA or City impact significance thresholds related to land use would be exceeded. Based on consideration of these factors, the Alan Road Access Alternative would likely result in an adverse, but not significant (Class III) environmental impact on the Alan Road neighborhood.

As described above and in *Topical Response No. 1. Use of Alan Road for Access to the Project Site (Appendix F)* the City has received several comments from the Braemar Ranch Homeowners Association and other members of the public regarding the potential for the Alan Road Access Alternative to impact the quality of life and character for the existing neighborhoods along Alan Road. The increased traffic along Alan Road would cause a perceptible change in the quality of life and quiet character of the neighborhood for residents because there would be more vehicles on the road each day.

The Alan Road Access alternative would avoid the following significant impacts associated with the bridge at Las Positas Road:

- Adverse effect of the bridge over Arroyo Burro Creek on riparian habitat and wildlife species (Class I impact), would be avoided by the Alan Road Access alternative
- The one-way stop controlled intersection at Las Positas Road would cause traffic safety hazards unless certain sight distance and lane striping improvements are implemented (Class II impact, however, the City is taking control of Las Positas Road from Caltrans, and when that transaction is complete a traffic signal will be installed). This intersection would not be part of the Alan Road Access alternative.

This alternative would forego the following beneficial impact: providing new pedestrian and bicycle coastal access from Las Positas Road and Elings Park. However, this alternative could be modified to include a pedestrian/bike bridge over Arroyo Burro Creek, thereby achieving this beneficial circulation element in another manner, which would likely involve construction by the City. The concept proposal reviewed by the City Council in October 2006 included a general easement for such a crossing but was designed in a manner that the crossing would not be at the northern end of the project area across Las Positas Road from the entrance to Elings Park. The precise locations of the future pedestrian-bicycle trail and bridge crossing were undetermined at that time, as was the financial responsibility for the trail construction. The general design of the concept plan, however, would have required that a pedestrian/bicycle trail be constructed within the City-owned parcel along the east side of the creek, to a pedestrian/bicycle bridge across the creek in the southern third of the development, linking to Alan Road. While providing a pedestrian/bicycle link, this general design would likely have similar significant biological impacts as the project's proposed vehicle bridge.

4.6 SECONDARY EMERGENCY ACCESS ALTERNATIVE

4.6.1 Description of the Alternative

Under this alternative, a secondary emergency access would be provided at the south end of the project site. The proposed 10-foot wide, 180-foot long paved bike path that would connect Alan Road and Driveway “A” would be widened to 16 feet and that pavement would be strengthened to provide emergency vehicle access for vehicles (one vehicle width only). Bollards would be placed at both ends of the roadway segment to prevent non-emergency vehicle use. The secondary emergency access would provide additional options for evacuation and access during earthquakes, floods, and wildfire affecting the project site, or the Alan Road neighborhood.

4.6.2 Feasibility and Meeting the Overall Project Objective

This alternative is considered potentially feasible from a physical and technical standpoint and would ~~have no effect on~~ meeting the overall project objectives. However, similar to the Alan Road Alternative discussed above, this alternative may not be socially feasible. Notwithstanding the emergency access benefit, at the time the City Council considered the project in December 2006, the residents along Alan Road and in the Braemar Ranch community expressed opposition to any measure that could potentially lead to any increase in vehicular use of Alan Road—even if only for emergency access or evacuation purposes. Consequently, the provision for emergency access for service vehicles at the north end of Alan Road was deleted from the project.

4.6.3 Environmental Impacts

~~This alternative would not result in any new adverse environmental impacts.~~ The environmental impacts of this alternative would be the same as for the proposed project. It would provide an additional level of safety for residents of both the proposed development, and the Alan Road neighborhood.

~~This benefit notwithstanding, at the time the City Council considered the project in December 2006, the residents along Alan Road and in the Braemar Ranch community expressed opposition to any measure that could potentially lead to any increase in vehicular use of Alan Road—even if only for emergency access or evacuation purposes. Consequently, the provision for emergency access for service vehicles at the north end of Alan Road was deleted from the project.~~

4.7 CONCRETE SIDEWALK ALTERNATIVE

4.7.1 Description of the Alternative

Under this alternative, concrete sidewalks would be constructed along roads at the project site instead of the proposed 5-foot wide pervious sidewalks.

4.7.2 Feasibility and Meeting the Overall Project Objective

This alternative is considered potentially ~~physically and technically~~ feasible from a physical and technical standpoint and would have a negligible effect on meeting the overall project objective.

4.7.3 Environmental Impacts

~~This alternative would not result in any new significant adverse environmental impacts.~~ The environmental impacts of this alternative would be ~~the same as~~ similar to those for the proposed project. This alternative would remove one of the key project features designed to reduce runoff and increase stormwater infiltration for water quality protection. It could be partially mitigated if the proposed concrete ribbon drainage along the site roads was constructed with a permeable surface.

4.8 AVOID LANDSLIDES ALTERNATIVE

4.8.1 Description of Alternative

As described in Section 3.2.1, there are several dormant bedrock landslides that occur in the Rincon shale along the base of the westernmost ridge on the project site (Figure 4-1). These landslides are considered to be deep-seated features that may have moved up to several hundred feet over the past several thousand years. Under this alternative, residential units located below these landslides would not be constructed. Hence, the proposed landslide stabilization using caissons and toe buttresses would not be required. Relative to the original 2005 project design, up to eleven (11) lots would be removed from the project layout, as shown on Figure 4-1 (Lots 1-6, 20, 21, and 12-14). These portions of the project site would be available for open space and roads. It is possible one or two lots could be constructed adjacent to Lot 7 and Lot 11. Hence, this alternative would result in a reduction of 9 to 11 lots. All other aspects of this alternative would be similar to the originally proposed project.

When applied to the Current 2008 Project design (refer to Section 4.13), this alternative would have a similar effect, leading to the deletion of (new) lots 1-6, 21, 22, and 12-14. This would represent a loss of 11 lots, and it may be possible to offset this reduction by adding one or two lots.

4.8.2 Feasibility and Meeting the Overall Project Objective

This alternative is considered potentially feasible from a physical and technical standpoint. However, ~~this alternative may not meet some of the project objectives, including creek restoration and public access if~~ be potentially infeasible because the reduction in residential units would be substantial (up to 11 lots), and therefore reduces the applicant's financial ability to implement these improvements ~~and could make the proposed project economically infeasible for the applicant.~~ However, under this alternative, the extensive landslide stabilization would not be required, which would substantially reduce site development costs, ~~and therefore, possibly make this alternative feasible.~~ A final determination of feasibility of this alternative would be made by City decision-makers if they conclude that this alternative is the preferred alternative based on the EIR analysis and input from the applicant and public during the public hearing process.

~~This alternative would not meet the overall project objective if the reduction in lots would prevent any type of residential development at the site and a reasonable return on investment.~~

4.8.3 Environmental Impacts

This alternative would avoid the following significant, but mitigable impacts (Class II) associated with the landslide stabilization and inherent hazards:

- Exposure of homeowners to a landslide hazard
- Temporary increase in local landslide hazard due to earthwork and construction activity associated with stabilization at the toe of the landslide during the construction period
- Increased hazards from adjacent landslides due to stabilization work

The reduction in the number of residential units would reduce the habitat, visual, and certain temporary construction-related impacts, as follows:

- Temporary adverse effects on Arroyo Burro Creek water quality due to construction activities
- Temporary and permanent loss of mostly non-native habitat due to site development
- Indirect adverse effects of residential development on wildlife using creek corridor
- Adverse effect of human activity and pets (using the pedestrian path) on aquatic and riparian habitats and species of Arroyo Burro Creek
- Visual impacts of site development
- Short-term, intermittent increase in ambient daytime noise levels at residences adjacent to the project site due to certain construction activities at Lots 1 and 2

The alternative would not cause any new impacts, or exacerbate previously identified impacts associated with the proposed project. It would provide additional open space and/or habitat area at the project site, which may be a beneficial impact to the biological resources, depending upon the nature and management of the undeveloped areas.

4.9 ALTERNATIVE LANDSLIDE STABILIZATION

4.9.1 Description of Alternative

As described in Section 2.2.8, the proposed method to stabilize the landslides at the project site involves the construction of a toe buttress (= keyway) at the base of each landslide impinging on the development. A buttress would consist of engineered fill seated on bedrock or below the slide plane. The buttress would provide support and mass to prevent the landslide from further slippage. Subdrains would convey seepage from above to below the buttress fill. Prior to excavating a large trench for the buttress, caissons would be placed in the landslide immediately above the buttress fill

area to stabilize the landslide during construction. The caissons would remain in place, providing additional support. The use of caissons avoids the need to remove a portion of the landslide above the buttress trench prior to construction. Hence, there would be less earthwork and a smaller footprint with caissons.

There are two alternative methods of stabilizing the landslides:

- Construct toe buttresses as proposed, but without the use of caissons. As noted above, this would require excavating portions of the landslides above the toe buttress area prior to excavation. The upslope extent of this excavation is unknown, but would likely involve several hundred feet. This work would occur on adjacent properties and require landowner permission and County permits. The disturbed landslides above the toe buttress would be stabilized by a combination of grading, geotextiles, subdrain systems, and vegetation.
- A second approach would be to construct retaining walls at the toe of each landslide, immediately above the lots adjacent to the landslides. The height of the retaining walls would vary up to 20 feet. Construction of the walls may require the use of caissons and/or excavation of a portion of the landslide mass above the wall locations prior to installing the walls.

The construction period for both alternatives would be slightly longer than for the proposed stabilization method. There may be excess fill associated with each alternative compared to the proposed project, as well as more prolonged noise impacts. However, much of this excess fill could be used on site for building pad development, and as such, may not result in additional truck trips for removal from the site.

4.9.2 Feasibility and Meeting the Overall Project Objective

The alternative stabilization method (without using caissons) is considered infeasible for several reasons. It is uncertain if the adjacent landowner would grant permission to work on landslides on their property due to the potential liability involved, and the disturbance to the hillsides. In addition, the City would not grant land use permits and grading permits for project-related actions on land not owned by the applicant unless the other landowner is part of the application request.

The retaining wall alternative is considered [potentially](#) feasible [from a physical and technical standpoint](#), but not desirable from an engineering viewpoint due to the extensive foundations required for large retaining walls. Additionally, it would not be consistent with the Single Family Residence Design Guidelines, which require retaining walls to be designed to blend with their surroundings and recommend a maximum height of six feet.

This alternative would meet the overall project objective as it would stabilize the landslides similar to the proposed project and allow for site improvements.

4.9.3 Environmental Impacts

This alternative would not avoid or significantly reduce any significant impacts (Classes I and II) associated with the proposed project (see Table 4-3). It would cause the following new, potentially significant impacts:

- Temporary, and possibly permanent, loss of native and non-native vegetation on steep slopes above the project site due to landslide removal or reduction during the construction of the toe buttresses
- Potential exacerbation of landslide hazards due to work directly on the face of the landslides above the toe buttress site
- Degradation of the visual setting on the adjacent hillsides due to earthwork on the landslide face, possibly leaving barren or weedy areas
- Degradation of the visual setting at the project site by the construction of tall retaining walls
- Increased construction duration, including associated noise and traffic impacts

4.10 ALTERNATIVE CREEK SETBACKS

4.10.1 Description of the Alternative

Background Information

The originally proposed project site plan includes the following setbacks from the top of bank along the west side of Arroyo Burro Creek, as described in Section 2.2 and shown on Figure 4-2:

- A 50-foot setback for all roads and structures. The buffer zone created by this setback would contain open space to be restored with native plants and a 5-foot wide permeable pedestrian path along the creek open space corridor.
- A 100-foot setback for structures only. The area between the 50-foot setback and the 100-foot setback would contain paved roads, pedestrian paths, storm drains, buried electrical conduits, street lights, landscaped yards, and fencing.

The City does not have a standard setback requirement for development along creeks except along Mission Creek. Protective setbacks are determined on a case-by-case basis, depending upon specific conditions of each site and proposed development. In 2003, the City issued draft Creek Development Standards for projects located next to all creeks in the City. Public hearings were conducted on the proposed standards, which resulted in a high level of interest and controversy. The City staff has indicated that the development of standards will require more time and further public participation and hearings beyond the hearing timeframe for this project.

The riparian resources that are protected by setbacks and the associated buffer zone include water quality in the creek, aquatic habitat and species, and wildlife habitat and species. Additional public benefits from setbacks include reduced bank erosion, public safety, and aesthetics. The

determination of the appropriate setback distance from creeks depends on many factors, including the specific objectives of the setback distance, the condition of the resources in the creek adjacent to the site, and the proposed land uses in the buffer.

In Section 3.3.2, the effects of the proposed setback distances and land uses in the associated buffer zones on biological resources in Arroyo Burro Creek were evaluated. It was concluded that the proposed project could result in the following significant, but mitigable (Class II) impacts on creek resources, even with the proposed setback. EIR mitigation measures have been developed to reduce these impacts to less than significant levels.

- Adverse effect of residential development and use of public open space on wildlife using the project site and creek corridor - this impact can be mitigated to a less than significant level by reducing nighttime lighting illumination of the corridor; restoring native habitats with wildlife value in the open space areas of the project site; and long-term management of the creek corridor to protect riparian resources.
- Adverse effect of human activity, pets, and pesticides on aquatic and riparian habitats and species of Arroyo Burro Creek - this impact can be mitigated to a less than significant level by properly managing public access and uses in the public open space adjacent to the creek; use of IPM approaches to pest and weed management in the creek open space corridor; and strategic placement of the pedestrian path in order to protect riparian habitats and species.

The use of the above management actions to protect creek resources does not necessarily imply that they are more effective in protecting or enhancing riparian and aquatic habitat, water quality, or wildlife than a larger creek setback – only that management actions can also reduce impacts.

Setback Alternatives

Several alternative setback distances are described and evaluated in this section that provide a range of approaches to protecting riparian resources beyond the proposed setbacks with the EIR mitigation measures. These alternatives are presented in the EIR to provide the City decision-makers with another approach (i.e., a larger setback) to reducing impacts to the riparian resources of Arroyo Burro Creek. The alternative setbacks are described below and shown on Figures 4-3 through 4-5. In each of these descriptions, the alternative setback is described relative to the original 2005 project configuration.

1. 100-foot Setback Alternative (Applicant's Top of Bank). Under this alternative, a uniform 100-foot wide setback would be established at the project site from the applicant's defined top of bank, as shown on Figure 4-3. No roads or structures would occur in the 100-foot wide buffer zone created by the setback. Native plant landscaping and a pedestrian path would occur in the buffer zone, the same as for the 50-foot setback zone under the proposed project. When compared to the originally proposed project, this alternative would require relocating the main road and Driveway A to the west. Shifting the road alignment would reduce the depth of Lots 2-6 and 7-11. These lots would need to be reconfigured to provide buildable land. This alternative would result in the loss of five lots. In addition, Driveway A would traverse the base of a hill, requiring a cut slope and retaining wall (Figure 4-3). All other aspects of the alternative would

remain the same as the originally proposed project, including a new intersection and bridge at Las Positas Road, stabilization of several landslides, a public trail and open space along the creek, and restoration of the creek corridor.

Relative to the Current 2008 Project design, this alternative would require eliminating one lot in the group of 4, 5, and 6. The current (2008) design deletes the former Lot 7, west of the Private Driveway near the oak grove, so this alternative would require no change at this location, other than a shifting of the Driveway to the west. Lots 7, 8, 9, 10, would be reconfigured to two lots, resulting in the loss of two, and Lot 11 would also be deleted in this alternative. Thus, the net effect of this alternative compared to the Current 2008 Project design would be a loss of four lots.

2. 100-foot Setback Alternative (Adjusted Top of Bank). Under this alternative, a uniform 100-foot wide setback would be established at the project site using a revised top of bank developed during the EIR studies, as shown on Figure 4-4. The adjusted top of bank was based on a careful review of the topographic map and field observations. It differs from the applicant's top of bank by including several areas where the creek bank was eroded by the 1998 flood events. These areas were included for the following reasons: (1) they represent the current grade break between upland areas and areas influenced by the creek; (2) riparian vegetation is present on the slope face in these areas, indicating that they are riparian zones, and not upland areas; and (3) although these new banks were formed during major floods, their presence indicates an outer extent of the creek influence that is evident and observable.

The 100-foot setback based on the adjusted top of bank is shown on Figure 4-4. No roads or structures would occur in the 100-foot wide buffer zone. Native plant landscaping and a pedestrian path would occur in the buffer zone, the same as for the 50-foot setback zone under the proposed project. When compared to the original 2005 project design, the Lane "A" and Driveway "A" would be shifted 30 to 50 feet to the west. This change in the road alignment would eliminate Driveway "A," eliminate Lot 7, reduce Lots 8 -11 to only two lots, and reduce Lots 1-6 to only three lots. There would be a net loss of six lots. In addition, the site would not be fully accessible from the north. Alan Road would be extended into the site in order to access three new lots at the southern end of the site. All other aspects of the alternative would remain the same as the proposed project, including a new intersection and bridge at Las Positas Road, stabilization of several landslides, a public trail and open space along the creek, and restoration of the creek corridor.

When compared to the Current 2008 Project design, this alternative would also extend the Alan Road cul-de-sac and lots at the southern end of the project resulting in the loss of three lots in this area. The Current 2008 design deletes the old Lot 7 near the oak grove, so there would be no change necessary at this location. Lots 7, 8, 9, and 10, would be reconfigured to two lots, and Lot 11 would be eliminated. This alternative would cause the deletion of six lots.

3. Increased Setback Alternative in Selected Locations. When compared to the original 2005 project design, under this alternative the main road and Driveway "A" would be shifted up to 25 feet to the west in order to increase the setback from the creek, as shown on Figure 4-5. The

intent of this alternative is to increase the setback to the maximum extent feasible, while still maintaining Driveway “A” and Lots 3 – 6. This alternative would result in the loss of Lot 7, and a reduction in the sizes of Lots 2 – 6, and Lots 8 -11. All other aspects of the alternative would remain the same as the proposed project, including a new intersection and bridge at Las Positas Road, stabilization of several landslides, a public trail and open space along the creek, and restoration of the creek corridor.

The current (2008) design deletes the old Lot 7 near the oak grove, and shifts the Private Driveway westward in a manner very similar to that suggested in this alternative. Under this alternative there would also be some additional minor changes in lot sizes in (new) Lots 7-10, and (new) Lot 11 at the northern end of the project would be deleted.

4.10.2 Feasibility and Meeting the Overall Project Objective

All three of the alternative creek setbacks are considered potentially~~technically~~ feasible from a physical and/or technical standpoint. That is, there are no engineering, circulation, drainage or geological obstacles to increasing the setback distance and modifying the project site layout.

The economic feasibility of the alternative creek setbacks is unknown at this time. It would be based on the economic effect of: (1) reducing the number of lots and/or reducing lots sizes which would reduce the revenues generated from home sales used to fund site improvements and to realize a return on investment; and (2) modifying the proposed site improvements (roads, drainage, earthwork), which may increase development costs. A final determination of feasibility of the setback alternatives would be made by the City decision-makers if they conclude that one these alternatives is the preferred alternative based on the EIR analysis and input from the applicant and public during the public hearing process.

The creek setback alternatives would meet the overall project objective of developing the site for residential use consistent with the City General Plan unless the economic impact of the loss of units renders the project infeasible, or if the reduction in revenue substantially reduces the applicant’s financial ability to implement the creek corridor open space improvements (i.e., new trail and creek restoration). A final determination of feasibility of the setback alternatives would be made by the City decision-makers if they conclude that one these alternatives is the preferred alternative based on the EIR analysis and input from the applicant and public during the public hearing process.

4.10.3 Environmental Impacts

The larger creek setback alternatives would reduce the following significant, but mitigable impacts (Class II) associated with the proposed project. The amount of reduction is generally related to the size of the setback.

1. Temporary adverse effects on Arroyo Burro Creek water quality due to construction activities that increase on-site erosion potential and introduce potential contaminants to the site. The setback alternatives would increase the distance between construction activities and the creek,

thereby providing more land for infiltration and Best Management Practices to further reduce construction stormwater pollution.

2. Adverse, indirect effect of residential development and use of public open space on wildlife and aquatic habitats in creek corridor. The setback alternatives would increase the distance between development and the creek to varying degrees, and as such, would further reduce these impacts by the following mechanisms:
 - By its very nature, a creek setback provides soil and vegetation where rainfall and runoff can be filtered through percolation or through interaction with rooted vegetation and leaf litter. Vegetated creek buffer zones can be very effective at capturing and retaining sediment, pesticides, oil/grease, and metals from upgradient areas. A larger setback provides more space for this biofiltering effect, and more residence time for the stormwater to be treated.
 - Riparian habitat on and above creek banks, including creek buffer zones, support aquatic habitat in the creek bottom by providing shade trees on the banks, providing replacement shade trees due to natural plant reproduction, and creating moist and shaded areas to support insect populations that are used as food sources for fish and amphibians in the creek. A larger setback provides more habitat to support the riparian functions in the creek corridor.
 - A larger creek setback provides a greater amount of native habitat in which natural processes of plant growth, reproduction, and senescence can occur. A larger population of plants provides a greater resiliency and buffer from invasive weeds which may degrade habitat values for wildlife.
3. Loss of up to seven large coast live oak trees. A larger creek setback would reduce the loss of these trees, depending upon the final setback distance and configuration.

The setback alternatives would reduce the above impacts to varying degrees based on the distance between development and the creek. The magnitude of the reduction in impacts by the setback alternatives would be as follows, in order of decreasing reduction in impact magnitude:

- 100-foot Setback Alternative (Adjusted Top of Bank) (Figure 4-4)
- 100-foot Setback Alternative (Applicant's Top of Bank) (Figure 4-3)
- Increased Setback Alternative in Selected Locations (Figure 4-5)

~~No significant unavoidable impacts to creek resources would occur under the proposed project (as mitigated), nor under the three setback alternatives. Impacts to creek resources described in numbers 1, 2, and 3 would be mitigated by features and mitigation measures in the proposed project, and would be mitigated under the three setback alternatives.~~ However, the setback alternatives would provide greater protection to creek resources than the proposed project, as well as provide additional incidental benefits of greater public open space and more visual screening at the project

site. These alternatives are presented in the EIR to provide the City decision-makers with another approach (i.e., a larger setback) to reducing impacts to the riparian resources of Arroyo Burro Creek.

The setback alternatives would not cause any new significant impacts. The 100-foot Setback Alternative using the applicant's top of bank would require a cut slope along Driveway "A." No significant geologic impact is anticipated, as the landslide above the cut slope would be stabilized appropriately. No significant visual impact is anticipated as the cut slope is not expected to be visible off site. The 100-foot Setback Alternative based on the adjusted top of bank would slightly increase the traffic along Alan Road because there would be one additional residence at the cul-de-sac. This impact would not be significant.

4.11 ALTERNATIVE DRAINAGE AND STORMWATER TREATMENT PLAN

4.11.1 Description of the Alternative

The original 2005 project design included a storm drain system to collect runoff through storm drain inlets in the street and along the main drainage through center of the site, and then discharge the runoff at two locations along Arroyo Burro Creek. Runoff from most of the site would have been collected; however, portions of the site would drain by overland flow to the creek. Runoff in the main drainage and a portion of the street runoff would have been directed to a basin for detention and stormwater treatment.

The 2005 Final EIR (Section 3.1.3) identified potential impacts associated with the original storm drain system proposed at that time. These impacts were as follows:

- Adverse effects of site development (i.e., impermeable surfaces) and site drainage (i.e., storm drain system) on the hydraulic conditions of Arroyo Burro Creek, possibly causing localized channel or bank erosion and on the bank storage conditions – these impacts can be effectively mitigated to a less than significant level by modifying the site drainage system to provide more infiltration and a greater number of outlets to the creek (Class II impact).
- Adverse effect of stormwater pollution from land development and public open space in the creek corridor on Arroyo Burro Creek water quality - this impact can be effectively mitigated to a less than significant level by incorporating appropriate stormwater management and treatment into the site drainage plan and by implementing Best Management Practices in the public open space (Class II impact).

For both impacts, the primary mitigation to avoid significant impacts is to modify the proposed site drainage and stormwater treatment layout and approach as presented in Mitigation Measures W-1 and W-4. In summary, these measures called for: (W-1) modifying the drainage design to provide at least four separate discharge points, to reduce the magnitude of discharge at each, and providing infiltration areas, and (W-4) general modifications to the stormwater design and management plan to separate runoff from the offsite watershed and convey it through the project site, and to incorporate detention basins, bioswales, permeable surfaces and other features of low impact development.

The 2005 Final EIR included an alternative, shown on Figure 4-6, that incorporates various drainage modifications and stormwater treatment facilities intended by these mitigation measures. The primary objectives of this alternative are to:

- Separate the off-site runoff from the Campanil Hill drainage from the on-site runoff, so that the relatively natural runoff from the hillside can be passed through the project site without contacting roads, driveways, and other developed areas.
- Treat stormwater runoff from the project site in accordance with the City's requirements under the NPDES municipal stormwater permit and current Stormwater Management Plan, using applicable City and County design standards for volumetric treatment
- Maximize stormwater infiltration and minimize discharge to the creek from onsite drainage

The main off site drainage can be separated from the on-site runoff by modifying the proposed grading plan. Site runoff can be detained in swales and small infiltration basins to facilitate infiltration at various locations on the site. Potential bioswales and stormwater detention basins are shown on Figure 4-6. Excess runoff from these basins would be discharged to the creek via multiple outlets. The increase in the number of bioswales and detention basins under this alternative would reduce the discharge rates to the creek from individual storm drain outlets, increase infiltration which will retain alluvial groundwater onsite to support riparian habitat, and increase stormwater treatment by biological filtering and infiltration. The bioswales and detention basins can be incorporated into the creek habitat restoration plan under the proposed project, and provide wildlife habitat benefits too.

With respect to the overall storm drainage design, the Current 2008 project design incorporates these measures. It includes five separate discharge points, instead of the original two. It provides for the separation of runoff from the offsite hillside area, and its conveyance across the property without mixing with runoff from streets and developed areas. Some detention basins are shown in the current designs, and others can be anticipated as work progresses towards final design. Thus, the major components of the mitigation measures, and features of this alternative, have already been incorporated into the project designs. The mitigation measures as originally stated in the Final EIR will be retained since they provide direction and guidance for review of final project plans.

4.1.1.2 Feasibility and Meeting the Overall Project Objective

The modified drainage and stormwater treatment alternative is ~~considered technically~~ potentially feasible from a physical and technical standpoint, and in fact is incorporated into the Current 2008 project design (refer to Section 4.13).

This alternative would meet the ~~overall~~ project objectives.

4.1.1.3 Environmental Impacts

This alternative would reduce the magnitude of the following significant stormwater quality impacts (Class II) associated with the proposed project:

- Adverse effects of site development (i.e., impermeable surfaces) and site drainage (i.e., storm drain system) on the hydraulic conditions of Arroyo Burro Creek, possibly causing localized channel or bank erosion – this impact can be effectively mitigated to a less than significant level by modifying the site drainage system to provide more infiltration and a greater number of outlets to the creek. (Class II impact)
- Adverse effect of stormwater pollution from land development and public open space in the creek corridor on Arroyo Burro Creek water quality - this impact can be effectively mitigated to a less than significant level by incorporating appropriate stormwater management and treatment into the site drainage plan and by implementing Best Management Practices in the public open space. (Class II impact)

This alternative would not cause any new significant environmental impacts.

4.12 ALTERNATIVE BRIDGE SITES

4.12.1 Description of the Alternative

Under this alternative, the bridge across Arroyo Burro Creek would be relocated to one of the following sites:

Site 1. About 100 feet north of the existing bridge alignment. This would require an easement from the Stone Creek Condominiums. The length of the bridge would be similar to the proposed bridge. However, the entrance to the bridge would not align with the entrance to Elings Park.

Site 2. Along the narrow historic bridge easement that extends about 500 feet from Las Positas Road to the project site in a northeast to southwest direction. This alternative would require a 400 to 500 foot span across the creek because the bridge would be aligned with the axis of the creek. The entrance to the bridge would not align with the entrance to Elings Park.

Site 3. About 500 feet south of the existing bridge. This site would require a larger easement across the City owned parcel compared to the proposed project, and would require an additional 100 feet of approach road. The entrance to the bridge would not align with the entrance to Elings Park.

Different bridge designs were also considered by the City and dismissed as infeasible primarily because they would have required more disturbance and excavation for buttresses (longer span) or would have resulted in more encroachment into the creek bed itself (different culvert designs).

4.12.2 Feasibility and Meeting the Overall Project Objective

Sites 1 and 2 are not considered technically and/or physically ~~technically~~ feasible because ~~of~~ traffic and intersection conflicts would occur because the entrances to Elings Park and the bridge would not align, but would occur in close proximity, causing driver confusion. Site 3 is considered potentially feasible from a technical and physical standpoint, although the likelihood for a larger encroachment into ~~easement from~~ the City owned land ~~-~~ is unknown.

This alternative would ~~not~~ meet ~~most of the the overall~~ project objectives. However, this alternative would not primarily because it would not provide as effective a pedestrian/bicycle link as the bridge location proposed.
~~, and would not minimize effects to biological habitat along the riparian corridor..~~

4.12.3 Environmental Impacts

Use of Site 1 would avoid the loss of a large oak and sycamore tree; however, the significant adverse impacts associated with the overall impact of the bridge at this site would remain the same as for the proposed bridge. Use of Site 2 would increase the magnitude of the significant adverse impacts to the riparian resources of the creek. Use of Site 3 would have similar significant adverse impacts ~~to riparian resources~~ as the proposed bridge, but would increase the impacts on adjacent upland habitats.

4.13 CURRENT 2008 PROJECT DESIGN

4.13.1 Description of the Alternative

This alternative is similar to the proposed project as described in the prior Final EIR dated January 2005. This alternative encompasses the modifications to the proposed project that were presented to the City Council in December 2006 after previous direction from the City Council and public testimony on the project. This alternative makes small changes to the proposed project, as described below, and also modifies the project to allow for larger creek setbacks as discussed in Section 4.10 Alternative Creek Setbacks. The changes included in this alternative do not alter the conclusions of the EIR related to impacts and mitigation. The project involves the same parcels and areas as the original project.

The areas to be developed are proposed to be subdivided into 25 residential lots (rather than 24 as in the proposed project). Table 4-6 below presents a summary of the residential development proposed on these lots based on information from the Tentative Subdivision Map. This information is preliminary and has been used for purposes of the analysis in this Revised EIR. The Specific Plan sets forth development regulations that will govern the final development.

**TABLE 4-6
SUMMARY OF PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL LOTS**

Lot No.	<u>Approx.</u> Lot Area, sf	Approx. Building Area, sf	<u>Approx.</u> Floor Area Ratio
1	6,624	1980	30%
2	6,089	1980	32%
3	5,084	1980	39%
4	7,528	1980	18%
5	5,612	1360	32%
6	7,121	1800	36%

Lot No.	<u>Approx.</u> Lot Area, sf	Approx. Building Area, sf	<u>Approx.</u> Floor Area Ratio
7	8,426	2570	31%
8	7,562	2570	34%
9	7,538	2570	32%
10	7,306	2400	34%
11	8,774	2480	31%
12	9,537	2700	28%
13	6,094	2700	39%
14	6,378	2370	38%
15	6,269	2420	39%
16	6,216	2460	40%
17	6,436	2460	46%
18	5,922	2080	35%
19	5,515	2080	38%
20	6,117	2080	34%
21	5,983	2400	40%
22	8,875	2480	28%
23	7,900	2570	33%
24	7,788	2400	31%
25	8,826	2570	27%

The dwelling units on Lots 13 and 14 are designed as a duplex, or zero lot line homes intended to provide an affordable housing component. The original project design included (old) Lot 7, just west of Driveway A in the vicinity of an oak grove. This lot has been deleted in order to provide better preservation of the oak grove and a slightly greater creek setback in this area.

The larger open space portions of the overall project, including the 35.71 acre parcel owned by the applicant and to be dedicated as open space, and the 5.89 acre parcel owned by the City along the east side of Arroyo Burro, would be as in the original project design. The hillside, creek, and interior open space areas within the development project would be very similar to those in the proposed project design. There would be a very slight increase in open space along the Arroyo Burro Creek corridor, and a slight decrease in the interior open space. These new project open space areas are summarized as follows:

- Lot 26, open space adjacent to the creek, 0.52 acres
- Lot 27, hillside open space, 2.68 acres
- Lot 28, larger open space adjacent to the creek, 4.34 acres
- Lot 31, central open space, 0.90

Access to most of the project would be via a bridge over Arroyo Burro Creek from Las Positas Road, as in the proposed project. The bridge design is essentially the same, but refinements in mapping and in developing the creek restoration plan indicate that a mature sycamore tree south of

the bridge location can be retained. The more detailed creek restoration plan also calls for a recontouring of the creek bank in the vicinity of the bridge to provide a more open area beneath the bridge. The updated details of the bridge design do not represent a change from the original project but are simply refinements in information. The overall effects of the bridge, therefore, would not change.

Access from the north end of Alan Road would be used for three new lots, instead of two as in the proposed project. The lot sizes at this location have been reduced so that the residential development area at the north end of Alan Road is slightly smaller to be more compatible with the lot and unit sizes in the Alan Road neighborhood, and the creek open space corridor containing the pedestrian and bicycle trail at this location at 4.86 acres is slightly larger than what was in the original design (approximately 4.0 acres). Creek setback distances in the Current 2008 design are larger in some areas than in the original project design. At the end of Alan Road, even though the new project design includes three lots, a reconfiguration of lot lines and change in building plans maintains the 100 foot setback between the creek and nearest proposed building at this location. The pedestrian/bicycle path at this location is also reconfigured in a way that provides a very slight increase in its distance from the creek (about 2-3 feet). A reduction in the lot depth for Lots 4, 5, and 6 allows the Private Driveway to be shifted slightly farther from the creek than was possible in the original design. The increase in setback for this driveway ranges from about 2 feet at its north end to about 40 feet adjacent to Lot 5.

The hillside open space area (Lot 27 in both the original and current design) is slightly larger in the current design --2.68 acres, as opposed to 2.59 acres in the original design. The central or interior open space (new Lot 31, 0.9 acres) is slightly smaller than this area in the original design (old Lot 25, 1.23 acres). This interior open space will contain an open vegetated channel to handle low volume flows from the offsite hillside area west of the project and convey this surface water through the project for discharge into Arroyo Burro. Higher flows will be diverted to the storm drain system to avoid flooding in the back yards adjacent to the central open space. The new design for this drainage includes an upstream retention/sediment basin, and a downstream retention basin, and energy dissipation features, as well as the grass lined channel of Lot 31. This design incorporates measures that were recommended as mitigation in the 2005 Final EIR.

In summary, the current (2008) design is, in many respects, very similar to the project as originally proposed and studied in the 2005 Final EIR. For the most part, the changes incorporate mitigation measures or alterations recommended in the Final EIR or reflect updates or refinements in the creek restoration plan. The total number of dwelling units has increased by one (from 24 to 25), and the project now includes two dwelling units intended to provide more affordable housing.

4.13.2 Feasibility and Meeting the Overall Project Objective

This alternative, or ~~current 2008 project design~~~~update of the proposed project~~, is ~~considered~~ potentially feasible ~~from a physical and technical standpoint~~ and meets the ~~overall~~ project objectives; ~~which are listed in Section 4.1 above, as effectively as the original design.~~

4.13.3 Environmental Impacts

The environmental effects of the 2008 project design, -which constitute refinements for the Veronica Meadows project, are virtually identical to those described in the 2005 EIR for the proposed project. With respect to the biological effects ~~of the overall project~~, and the access bridge in particular, the 2008 project design effects are slightly less than those described for the original design (as described in the original EIR (January 2005), and as discussed in the Revised EIR Section 3.3). The mature sycamore tree on the west side of the creek, south of the bridge location, can now be retained. There will likely be some trimming and root pruning necessary for this tree, which may cause some damage, but the tree can be preserved. The bank reconfiguration proposed in the creek restoration plan will help to open up the creek banks under the bridge, allowing more light and improving the chances for regrowth of taller, denser riparian vegetation. While these factors are considered improvements, or reductions in the intensity of the impact, the overall conclusion that the project effects on the riparian corridor are significant and unmitigable (Class I) remains unchanged.

The ~~c~~Current 2008 project design includes several minor reconfigurations that provide an additional setback distance between the Private Driveway and the creek. In this respect, the ~~current design~~ 2008 project -would design would have slightly less impact and would allow for a better creek restoration and open space corridor than the original project.

With respect to traffic, there would be a very slight increase in daily traffic along Alan Road from the 2008 project ~~is new~~ design with three residences at Alan Road rather than two. This increase in traffic would not be a significant impact on Alan Road. It would also not contribute a significant increment to the already poor Level of Service at the intersection of Cliff Drive/Las Positas Road. Anticipated cumulative impacts at this intersection would remain significant.

4.14 SUMMARY

A summary of the comparative impacts of the project alternatives is provided below.

The following alternatives appear to be technically or economically infeasible:

- No Project Alternative – without development, the property may not be retained by the owner
- Avoid Landslides Alternative - if the reduction in the number of lots is severe and the avoided costs of landslide stabilization do not fully offset the economic loss
- Alternative Landslide Stabilization - due to need for off-site stabilization
- Creek Setback Alternatives – if the reduction in the number of lots is severe
- Alternative Bridge Sites (Nos. 1 and 2) – due to traffic conflicts

The following alternatives do not appear to meet the overall project objective:

- No Project Alternative – no residential development would occur
- Alternative Bridge Sites

The following alternative would result in new significant impacts (Class I) compared to the proposed project and from an engineering and geologic standpoint is considered undesirable:

- Alternative Landslide Stabilization – significant impact due to greater earthwork

The following alternatives would increase certain impacts of the proposed project or create new less than significant impacts and would not alleviate Class I biological impacts associated with the proposed project:

- No Annexation Alternative
- Pre-Annexation Zoning Alternative

The following alternative would avoid the significant, unmitigable biological impact (Class I) of the proposed project, but would create a new significant, unmitigable traffic impact (Class I) and has other disadvantages:

- Alan Road Access Alternative – it would avoid the impact of the bridge on riparian habitat and wildlife, but would contribute traffic in excess of the City threshold causing a new Class I impact at the Cliff Drive/Las Positas Road intersection. This alternative would increase the length of exposure to project construction traffic, which is a Class 1 noise impact. This alternative would also affect the Alan Road neighborhood and Braemar Ranch community with additional traffic, noise, and related effects but at less than significant levels. It is also possible that this alternative would not include the beneficial impacts of the proposed project on public pedestrian and bicycle access in the Las Positas Valley. Finally, while this alternative is technically feasible, it is questionable whether this alternative is feasible from a social and neighborhood compatibility perspective given the degree of opposition by the public for this alternative. This issue will be further addressed by the City's decision making bodies in their review of the project.

The following alternative would meet the project objectives in a manner similar to the originally proposed design, and would have some additional environmental benefits when compared to the original design:

- 2008 Project Design – which would have a slight reduction to biological effects, but not enough to alter the significant and not mitigable (Class I) conclusion regarding impact to the riparian corridor. This alternative, which is now the current project design, also increases the distance between the creek and development areas, particularly with respect to the location of the Private Driveway which will be up to 40 feet farther from the creek. This alternative also includes two affordable dwelling units.

| The following alternatives would avoid ~~a~~ significant, but mitigable impacts (Class II) of the proposed project:

- Alternative Creek Setbacks – they would reduce the magnitude of impacts on riparian resources, wildlife, aquatic habitats, and water quality in the Arroyo Burro Creek corridor. However it is possible that economic factors may affect the feasibility of these alternatives should numbers of units be severely reduced.
- Alternative Drainage and Stormwater Treatment Alternative – it would reduce the magnitude of hydraulic and water quality impacts on Arroyo Burro Creek, appears feasible, and meets project objectives

Under the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR must identify the environmentally superior alternative, other than the No Project Alternative, as information for the City’s decision makers to consider. The environmentally superior alternative should have fewer significant impacts (Class I and II) and less-than significant impacts (Class III) with lower magnitudes compared to the proposed project, while still meeting the overall project objectives.

The EIR identifies several alternative creek setback distances that would increase the buffer zone between Arroyo Burro Creek and the proposed land development. Increasing the setback distance and managing the resultant creek buffer zone for riparian habitat would reduce the following impacts associated with the proposed project (even though these impacts can be mitigated to a less than significant level by the EIR mitigation measures):

- Disturbance of riparian-associated wildlife due to noise, night-time lighting, human activity, pets, and traffic
- Adverse effects of herbicide use in residential areas on aquatic and riparian resources
- Adverse effects of stormwater runoff from roads and residential areas on creek water quality
- Potential degradation of riparian vegetation due to invasive exotic plants from residential areas.

A wider buffer zone provides greater distance and vegetation to “filter” or otherwise screen the creek from the adverse impacts of residential land uses. There is substantial evidence in the scientific literature and natural resource management fields that demonstrate larger and deeper habitat areas are generally more productive, support greater abundance and variety of wildlife, and are more resilient to human disturbances. The larger buffer zones associated with the alternative creek setbacks would also provide a greater assurance that a creek buffer zone would be present indefinitely, even after catastrophic flood events that could erode the creek banks and adjacent buffer zone.

Based on the above considerations, the environmentally superior alternative is the Alternative Creek Setbacks. Increasing the setback distance and enlarging the creek corridor buffer zone would further reduce water quality and biological impacts to Arroyo Burro Creek resources compared to the proposed project and the applicant’s proposed creek protection measures. This alternative would

meet the overall project objective. [However, it should be noted that the 2008 project design provides additional setback distance between the Private Driveway and the creek as well as a slightly greater creek setback near Lots 13 and 14.](#)

There are three scenarios of larger creek setbacks presented in the EIR, all of which involve the loss of residential lots. The loss of these lots would reduce the applicant's ability to develop the project, and as such, could cause the project to be infeasible. The environmentally superior alternative would be a revised site layout with a balance between a greater creek setback and the loss or reconfiguration of developable lots. A range of setback alternatives with varying effects on the site layout is presented in this section for consideration if and when this balance is required.

As noted above, CEQA only requires that an EIR identify the environmentally superior alternative for information for the decision-makers. The identification of a preferred alternative by the City's decision-makers will involve many factors, including feasibility of alternatives, balance between public benefits and environmental impacts, consideration of one type of impact compared to another impact, and public concerns and comments during the hearing process.

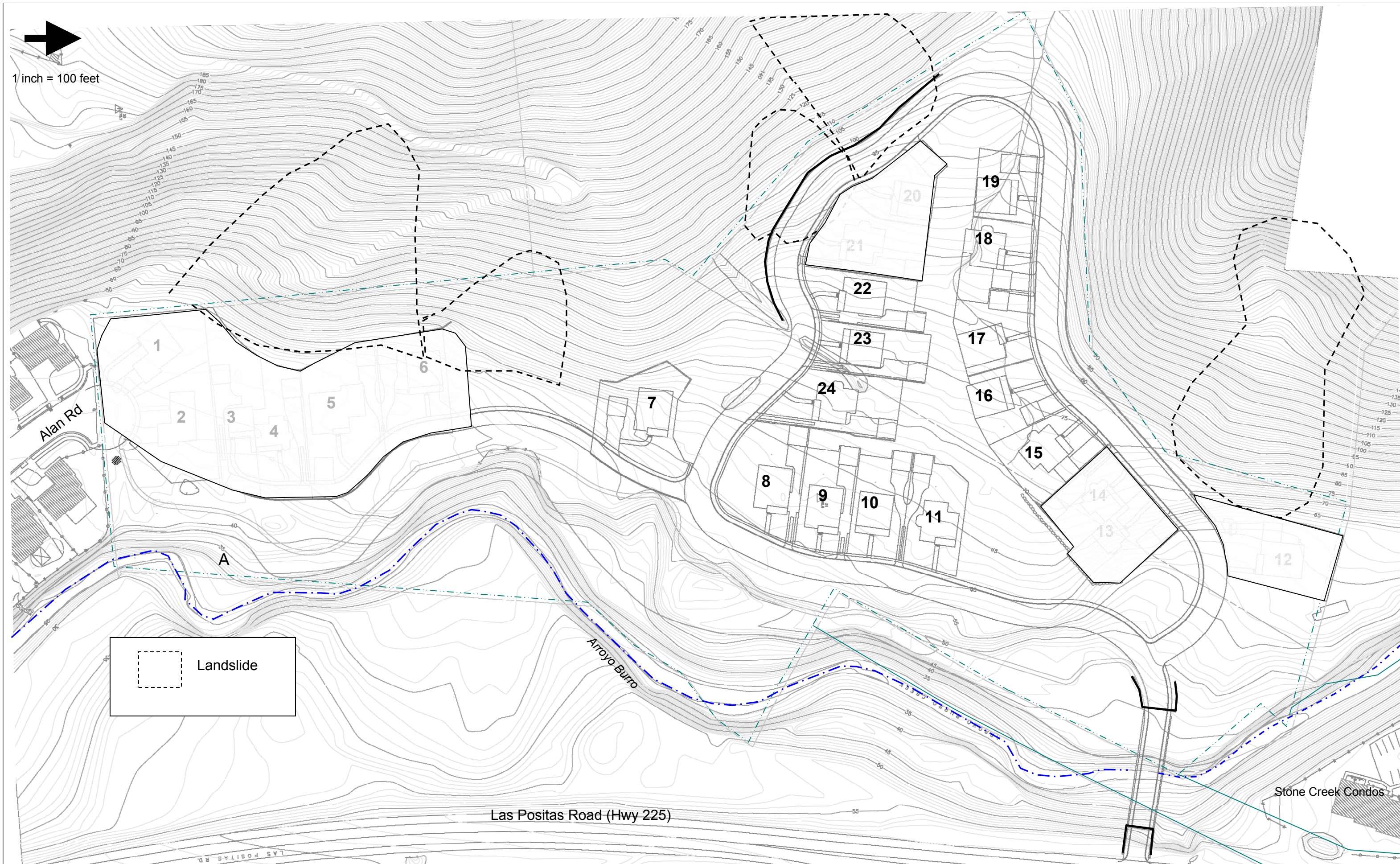


Figure 4-1. Landslide Avoidance Alternative
(based on original 2005 project design)

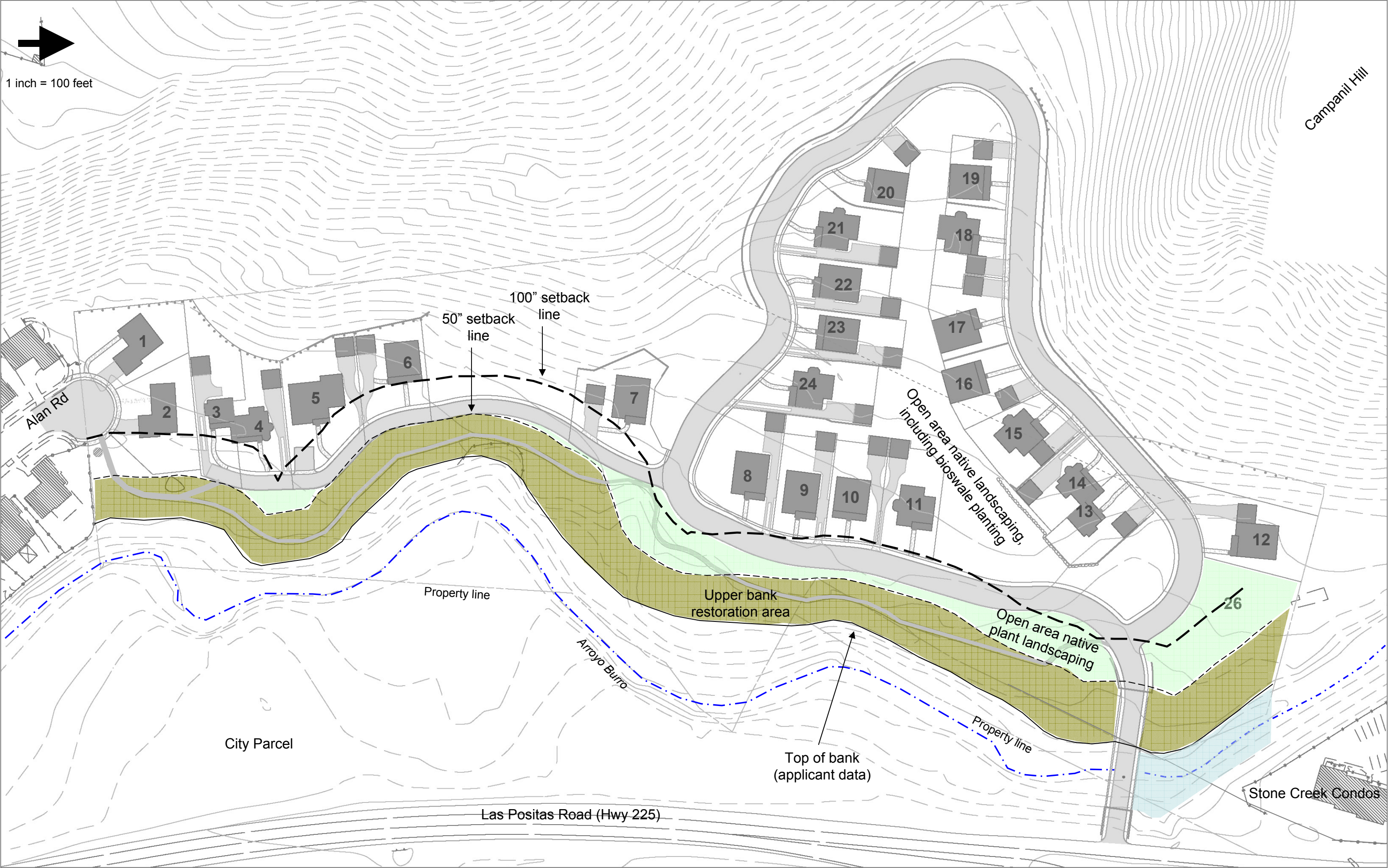


Figure 4-2. Proposed Creek Setbacks
(based on original 2005 project design)

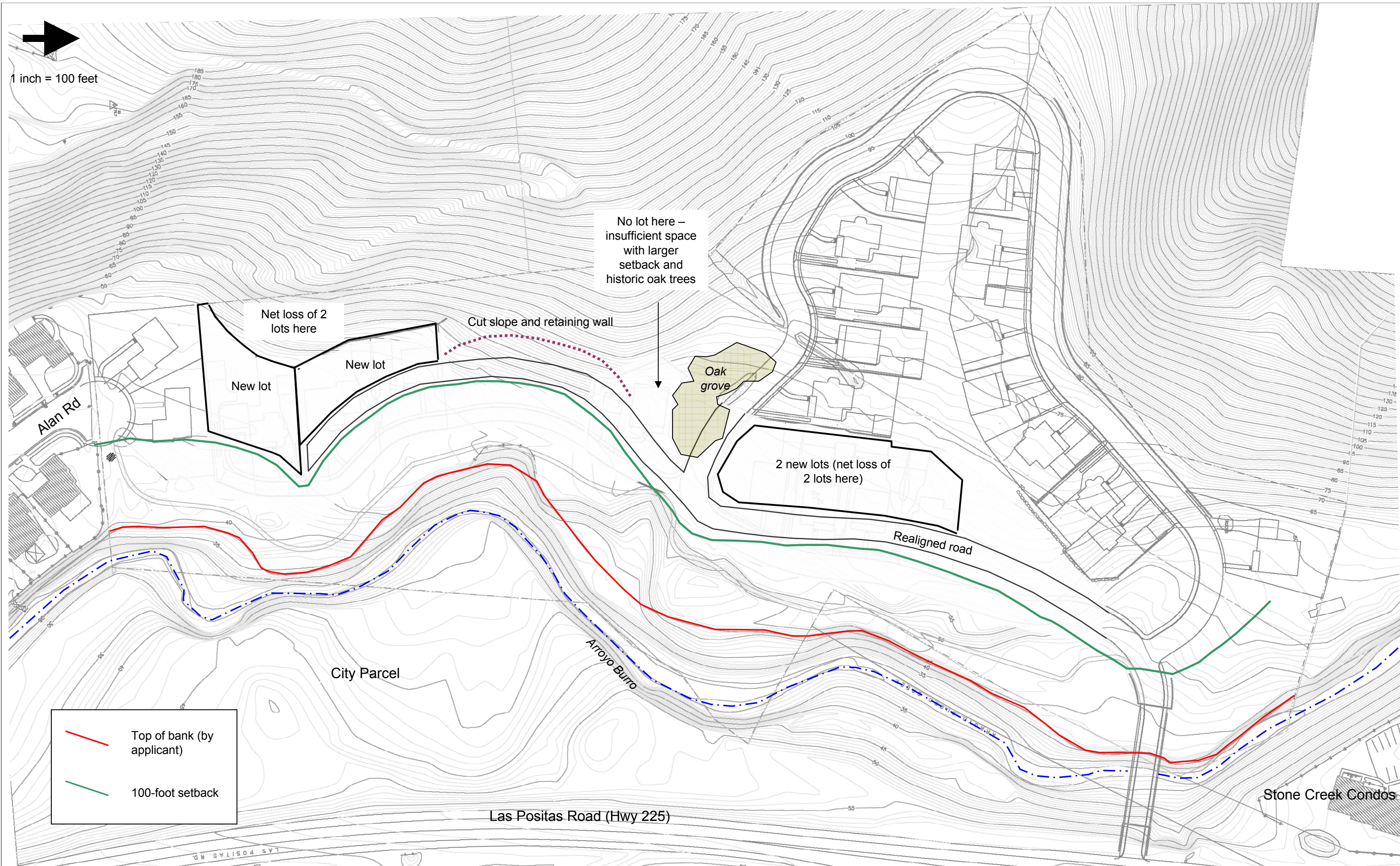


Figure 4-3. 100-foot Creek Setback (Applicant Top of Bank)
(based on original 2005 project design)

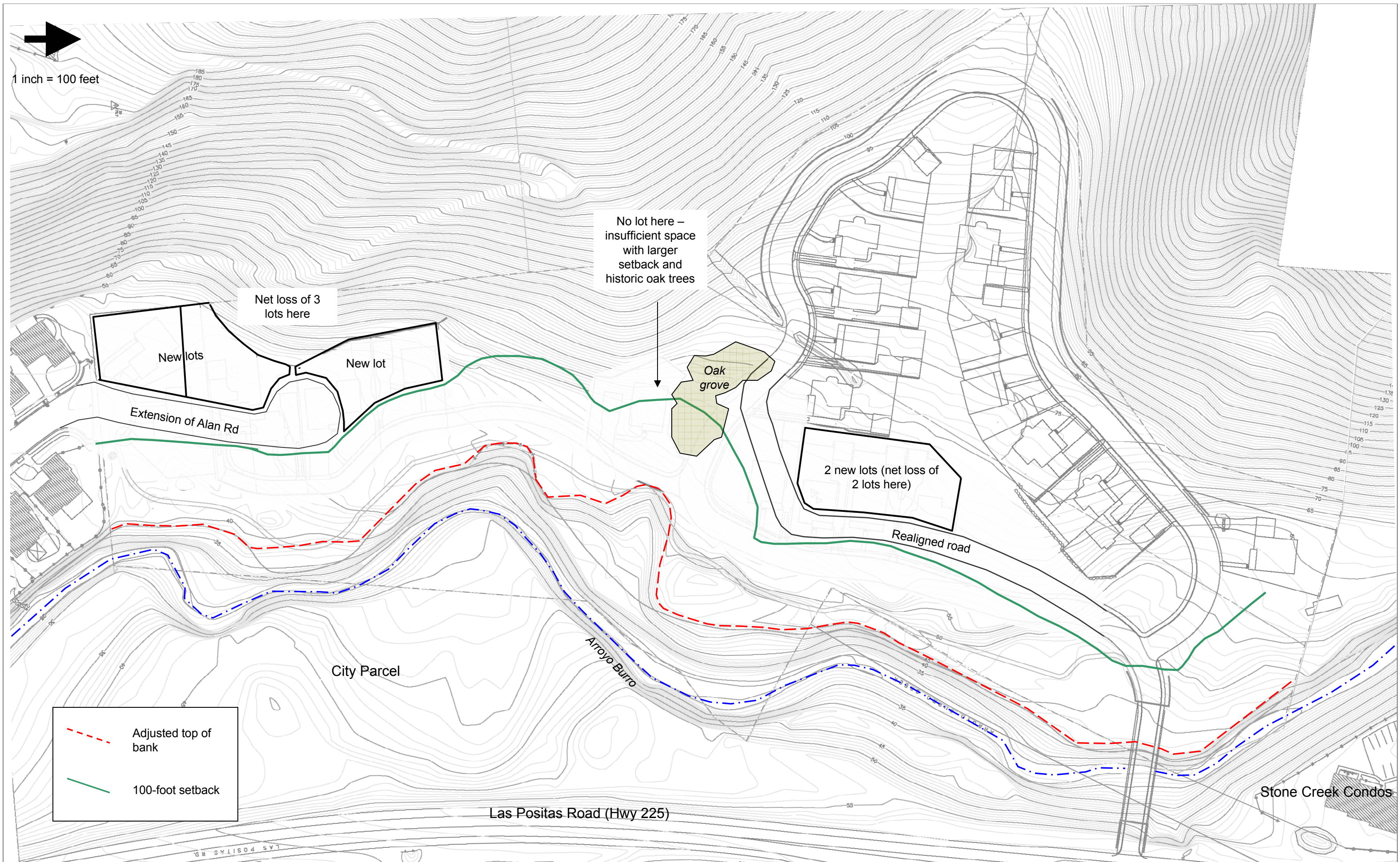


Figure 4-4 100-foot Creek Setback (Adjusted Top of Bank)
(based on original 2005 project design)

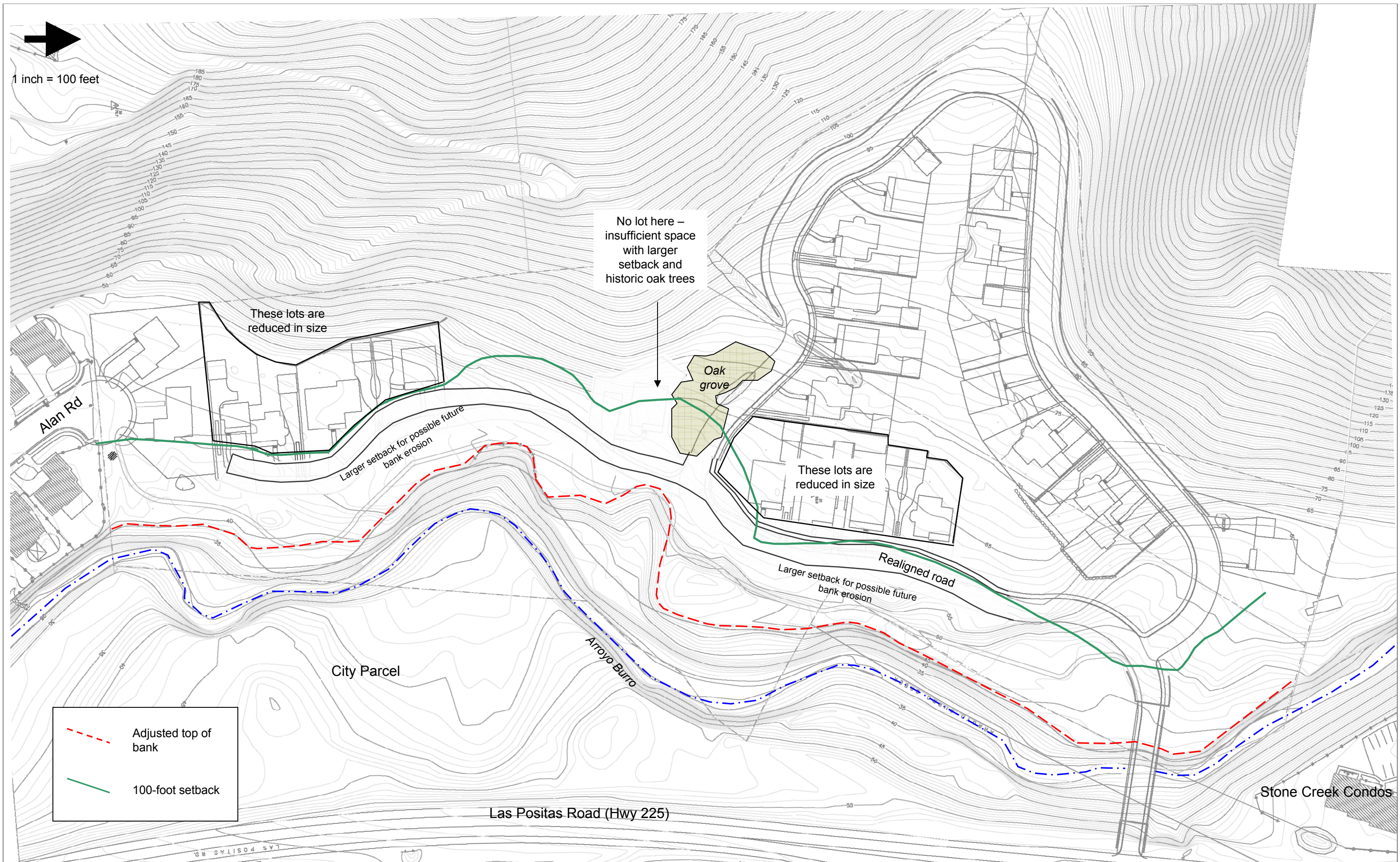


Figure 4-5. Increased Creek Setback in Selected Locations
(based on original 2005 project design)

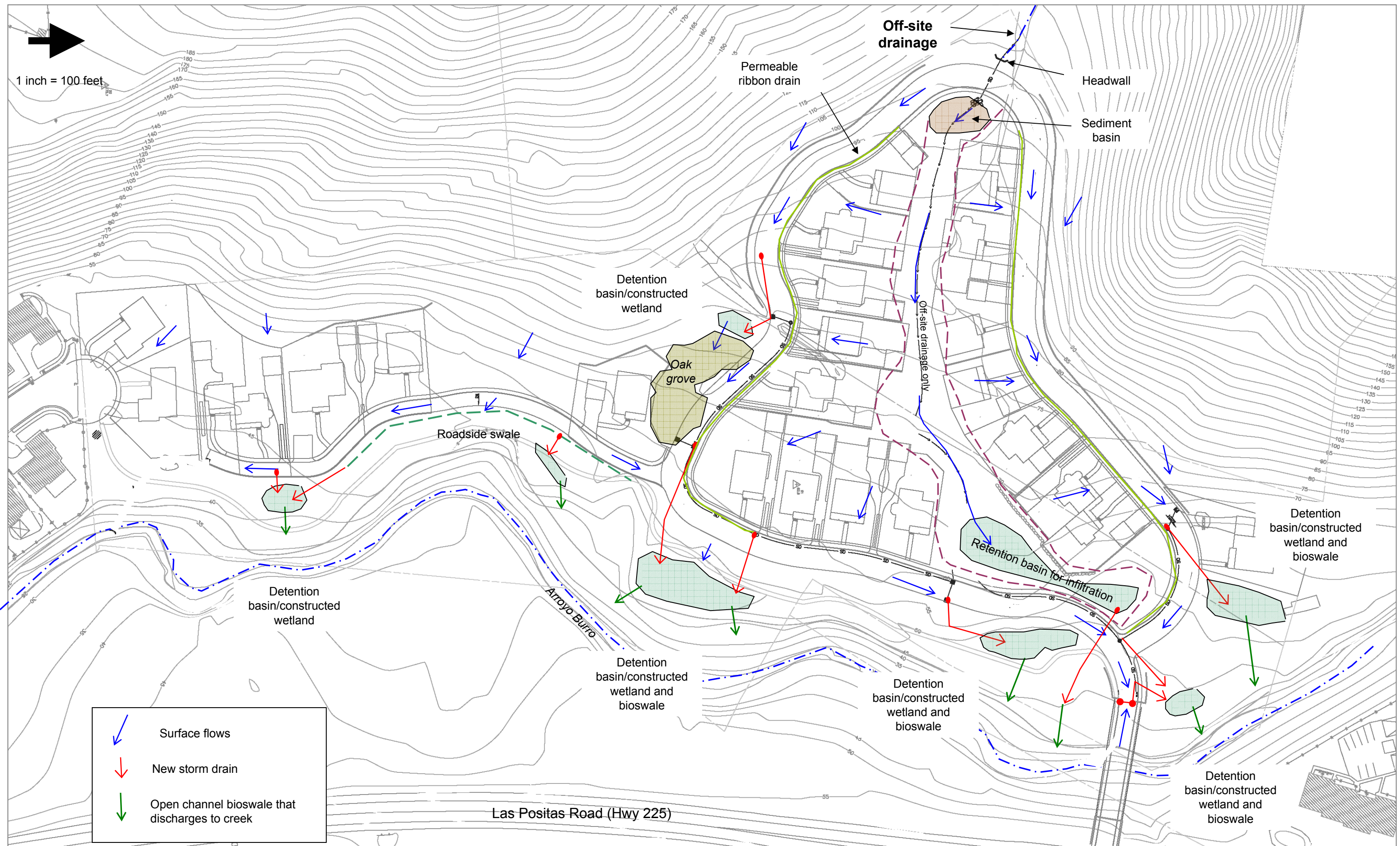


Figure 4-6. Alternative Drainage and Stormwater Treatment Plan
(based on original 2005 project design)



Figure 4-7. Proposed Project Layout 2008
(Based on Current 2008 Project design)